

Exeter Historic District Commission

April 21, 2016

Draft Minutes

Call meeting to Order: Patrick Gordon called the meeting to order at 7 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members present: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, Julie Gilman, Select woman, Valerie Ouellette, Pam Gjetum, Clerk, Fred Kollmorgen, Pete Cameron

New Business: Public Hearings: The application of Julie Williams (on behalf of the American Independence Museum) for a change to existing appearance of landscaping design (stone staircase) at One Governors Lane. Before Julie started speaking, Julie stated that she is on the Board of Governors at the museum. Patrick asked if she was reclus herself and Julie stated that she would leave that up to Patrick. Patrick had no reason to have Julie do this. No other board member had reason either. Fred made a motion to have Julie remain. Pete seconded. All were in favor and Julie will remain.

Julie stated that anyone riding downtown has seen the ugly signs saying no access to the staircase. It was noticed towards the end of last season that the staircase was unsafe for the public and it has been closed down. She stated the museum was able to raise some money and have plans to replace the staircase with a new one that would utilize the same look and feel of the stone wall that is currently the retaining wall that holds the property up. It will have six steps up to the property and be straight instead of a turn. This will be more welcoming, safer and also less expensive. There will be no more railroad ties. Patrick asked if they were only doing the staircase right now and Julie stated that was correct. Fred made a motion to accept the application. Pam seconded. All were in favor and application accepted.

Patrick then asked if there was anyone from the public who was for or against the project and there were none. Patrick then asked the commission if they had any questions and they did not have any. Patrick stated he did have one question. It was mentioned that the museum was going to utilize as much of the stone that is currently there. He asked if the mason thought this was a good idea. Julie stated that he did think it was. He will be trying to make the wall look as original as possible. Julie stated that at the last meeting she presented the full landscape and one of the thoughts was that they wanted Swasey Parkway to speak to our landscape. One of the things they would like to do is have a cross walk and she stated that the museum agrees with Fred that this is very important. They wanted to potentially move the cross walk to a space that would be handicap accessible for which this staircase could not. They looked and might try to approach the town to have the cross walk that currently goes to the DTC Building instead be moved to meet with the sidewalk of Swasey Parkway and then come into our property right across that could be handicapped ramped into our grounds. Patrick asked if this was something the museum was proposing now and Julie stated they are in the process of discussing it now.

Next on the agenda is the application of Cellco Partnership (d/b/a Verizon Wireless) for new construction and change to an existing structure to accommodate the installation of wireless communication equipment on the rooftop at 24 Front Street. Josh then spoke who represents Verizon Wireless. He stated he thought this was a simple proposal. They are looking to install a false chimney at 24 Front Street to conceal a new wireless installation up there. With the town growing, at a certain time of the day with so many people using their devices at the same time, it drains the capacity and slows the network down. They would like to build and mimic the existing fake chimney. No one will see any of the cable or wires because it will be concealed in the chimney. Josh stated that on the 5th tab of the

application package, it shows what the false chimney will look like when added to the building. Josh then asked if he could answer any questions about what Verizon was trying to do. Patrick asked if the chimney that was there already would be redone. Josh stated that it would not be. They would like to match it and use the existing materials to do this.

Julie asked about the location of the new false chimney. She stated that it is right out front and taller than the existing one. She stated it is the first thing you will see when driving by the bandstand and perhaps it could be pushed back. Josh stated that he did not have the answer to that question. He stated that when the engineers were on the rooftop, they picked the locations for the cables and antennas. Patrick stated that it is changing the whole mass of the building. He stated that this building has gone through numerous changes. He then stated that a proposal to move it more to the back of the building would be more acceptable. Josh stated that the fake chimney is on that side of the building to get signals. Patrick stated that the reason the other chimney works so well is because it is not so visible to the public. Josh will talk with the engineers to see what can be done. Pam then stated that a skyline would look better. Fred stated that L1 and L2 need to be fixed. Patrick stated that what the commission would do instead of proceeding with an acceptance and/or approval, the commission will table the application until the next meeting. Josh stated he is more than willing to try and get this modified to what the commission is recommending. Fred made a motion to table the application. Julie seconded. All were in favor and application tabled until next month's meeting.

Next is the application of Phillips Exeter Academy for a change in appearance to fencing and landscape, relocation of an existing structure, new construction and signage in conjunction with their proposed Front Street Crosswalk Project. The subject property is located at 53 Front Street.

Ron Johnson spoke and stated he is the Senior Manager for Grounds and Athletics at Phillips Exeter Academy. He introduced colleague Anita Bailey. She is available for questions or comments. He stated that the project being presented tonight is the Front Street Crosswalk Project and this has been discussed with the town for several years. The goal is to help improve pedestrian safety on the street.

Dave from VHB showed the commission slides of the project and talked about what they will be doing. The commission also had packages explaining the project. Crosswalks and bump outs. These crosswalks are at the two main crossings located on Front Street between Tan Lane and Spring Street. These crosswalks have considerable foot traffic from students and others throughout the day and into the evening. Also, this area of Front Street experiences high volumes of traffic. There will be lights on both sides of the crosswalks. The light chosen by all is a nice decorative one with LED lighting that will be pointed down at the crosswalk. After Dave was through with the slides he asked the commission if there were any questions he could answer. Julie stated that she felt the application was complete and made a motion to accept. Fred seconded. All were in favor and application accepted.

Patrick asked if there was anyone from the public who was for or against this project. There were none. Julie stated that being a member of the Selectboard, she needed to ask a few questions. She asked if the change in crosswalks had been discussed with the Public Works. The answer was that they had been. They had some good comments and went back and forth and it was signed off on. Julie asked if the lights were like the ones used in the park on Water Street. They are putting one on Tan Lane that matches that one. Julie stated that she asked about the lights because the Town has been talking for many years about changing the lights downtown and she is not committing the Town to use this style but it will be a conversation they will have eventually and talk about why you chose these. Patrick thanked them for the complete application. Julie had one more question. She asked if the driveway was really called Easy Street. Anita stated that she has always called it that. She thinks it is more of an

adult thing now. If you were to ask any of the children today, they would not know anything about it. Fred then made a motion to approve. Pete seconded. All were in favor and application approved.

The next item on the agenda is also an application from Phillips Exeter Academy for change in appearance of an existing structure, window replacement and signage on the property located at 237 Water Street, Tattersall House.

Anita stated that they believe the main part of the building was built around 1732 to 1735. She stated that this building has had many uses over the years. It was a doctor's office, optometrist and dentist office. In 1963, Phillips Exeter purchased the building from Alice Tattersall and that name stuck and that is what we have been calling it. Since Phillips Exeter has owned it, it had a couple of other uses as rentals. First of all, it was renovated and rented out to the Staving Chef Restaurant and then it sat for a period of time unused. They were then able to rent it out to Cambridge Trust who made improvements to the building and now they have been gone for a few years. It has been empty for some time and it is now ready to find a new use. They are planning on moving their summer school office here. They are currently located at 40 Front Street and they are a little cramped in their quarters so every summer they move across campus to the Phelps Academy Center and then they move back at the end of the summer.

This is getting a little old for them. In trying to figure out a use for this building, this seemed to be a good match. Most of the work that will be taking place will be inside the building. They will be looking at the exterior to make some improvements as well. This will make the building look and function better for its new use. With Anita today, is Shannon Arthur and Joshua White, architect firm of TMS Architects. Shannon stated that this is a very exciting building that we have an opportunity to give some new life to. He showed slides to the commission which took about seven minutes. They will be working on the landscaping of the building. Also, they will be working on some exterior components of the building in terms of removal of existing windows and some relocation of openings on the north addition which is the later addition to the building. They will fix the run down bulk head. They will work on a new entrance canopy at one of the access points into the building. They also will have some signage which will help promote the summer school being part of the academy. They are looking at replacing some of the windows that are in poor shape. Some of the windows they want to replace are really old and part of the 1989 addition. They will be working on the roof. It is failing in certain parts. They will also be working on some of the detail around the roof and the overhang trim.

Josh spoke about the exterior projects. There will be a new doghouse on the back. There will also be a new stairway and new light fixtures. He talked about replacing the crosswalk. They are also working on signage for the building. Signage in this case is specific to Phillips Exeter and they have two different sizes. They brought an enlarged board with photos on it for the commission to look at. Pete asked if the building would be used for classes. Anita said it would not be. It will be offices. He also asked if there would be any loss of parking and Anita said there would not be any lost parking. Patrick asked if the existing roof was shingles. Anita stated it is not, it is asphalt. Patrick asked about lighting. Shannon stated that there would be lighting on each side of the doors.

Anita stated that the signage that says Tattersall House is currently on the side of the house, but they will be moving it to the front of the house because it gives it a better sense of history. Anita talked about the windows. She stated there is a really nice and big window around the back and that will not be replaced. All of the other windows were replaced in 1989 and they are all single pane. They would like to put in more efficient windows. However, they are doing it as an add alternate because they do not know what the cost will be. It is currently out to bid. Patrick asked if the money is not in the budget to replace them, would they be repaired. Anita stated they would be repaired if needed to be. Patrick

stated that one of the companies they may be using has vinyl windows and the commission would not approve this. Anita stated that she had those same windows approved in 2013 and at different locations in 2012 and 2010. Anita asked if there has been a change in the regulations since 2013.

Patrick stated that the regulations they have now are undergoing revisions. He stated that what the commission has learned from previous applications and the extent of materials lasting, they treat each one as its own separate application. What they have learned is that with this material for windows, it is just not a conducive material to be used. Patrick's recommendation to the Board would be not to use those. Anita asked what the commission would approve as a window. Patrick stated wood or fiberglass. Patrick stated that he had one more question regarding the signage bracket. He stated that in the application they received did not show a bracket but they saw a bracket there and he asked Anita if she could get the commission a copy showing the bracket in be included in the package. Anita said she would give Patrick a copy of what she had and then she stated that she does not have a specific bracket in mind yet. Her intent is to use a bracket that is similar to the original.

Patrick then asked the Board if they had any other questions or concerns. There were not. Fred made a motion to accept the application. Pam seconded. All were in favor and application accepted.

Other Business: Approval of the March 17th minutes. Both Fred and Patrick had a few changes. Julie made a motion to approve minutes with amendments. Pam seconded. All were in favor, minutes approved as amended.

Patrick stated next under other business is the Commission representative for the Planning Board Master Plan Steering Committee. Julie asked if the commission received an e-mail from Mr. Sharples. They had and Fred stated that he was very impressed with how many applications they have received for this. The purpose of this representative is to attend the meetings and report back to the HDC with their input. Julie stated that there is no meeting scheduled yet. Fred stated that he thinks it will be later this month or the first week in May. Pam stated that if it was on a free night for her, she could do it. Julie stated to think about volunteering for it now and if it does work out with your schedule you can always switch off and give it to someone else. Pam then stated that she will do it but her calendar is pretty full. Patrick then stated the commission will pencil Pam in for now and if it does not work with Pam's schedule, he will be the representative.

Julie stated that May is the time the commission reorganize the chair, vice chair, etc. so she just wanted the commission to be considering this.

Julie then stated that one more thing is to say Farewell to Fred. This is his last meeting with the commission. He has served on it for fourteen years. Patrick stated that this was very sad news because has been a huge help. Patrick stated that Fred's knowledge of the town is unsurpassed. Julie then stated that Fred is the only one who has taken her up on her demand for replacement. Fred stated that he is working on it.

With no further business, Julie made a motion to adjourn. Pam seconded. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary